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## A NEW LAND OF PROMISE.

At noon on Sunday, in July last, the barque 'Royal Tar' sailed from Sydney, New South Wales, carrying two hundred and thirty-nine passengers bound for Paraguay, in South America, there to establish a Socialistic colony on Communistic principles. In the history of the world, no movement of the same kind in its principal feature has been recorded. From countries with dense populations, co-operative bodies have gone forth in search of work, or of Utopias in which work would be unnecessary: in quite recent times the Kaweah Colony settled on the Pacific slope; Adams' American Colony pushed off to Palestine; the Credit Foncier Company moved to Mexico; the Patagonian Colony to the Chubball River; and the Gonzales Colony to Paraguay. But the emigrants from Australia were circumstanced as none of these were. The total population of their island continent is just over three millions; while the area of land at their disposal may be reckoned at a square mile per head. Queensland alone, which contributed the majority of the emigrants, contains 668,000 square miles—an area equal to the German Empire, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, and Belgium, all together. It contains, as has been computed, the area of three Austrian empires, or six kingdoms of Italy, or nearly four French republics. South Australia contains 914,730 square miles; and West Australia, 978,298; and both colonies combined possess fewer inhabitants than a tenth-rate city of Europe.

Why, with so much unoccupied land around them, did these people set forth for Paraguay? In the first place, the leaders of the expedition, determining to make the movement a success, selected a spot from which the difficulty of a return would be particularly great. They knew the capabilities of the thousands of square miles of Australian land which have never been put to industrial use; but they knew also

that if they settled on any part of Australian territory, they would from time to time be encroached upon by friends or tempted to revisit old scenes. Going to Paraguay amounted to burning their boats. In the second place, the land allotted to them in Paraguay was highly reported upon. It was described by their own advance agents as lying one hundred and ten miles east from Asuncion, near Villa Rica, and within fifteen miles of a railway. The Tibicuari River, which flows through it, is navigable for boats or rafts; and numbers of small streams run through the country. Besides, the terms granted by the Paraguayan Government were considered more favourable than any likely to be obtained in Australia. The authorities in Paraguay engaged to hand over to the colony one hundred leagues of country, free of all charges, with free railway conveyance of persons and goods from Asuncion to the nearest point to the proposed settlement.

If the exodus were to end with the July departures, the movement would be remarkable; but those who have gone are merely the pioneers of a still growing party. Provision is already made for the transfer by barque and steamer of fully five thousand persons. A brief sketch of the main features of a scheme which thus affects so many will therefore be interesting.

Three years ago, Australia was plunged into a labour strike such as, for extent and intensity, it had never before experienced. The strike extended from the steamers around the coast to the shearing sheds in the interior. Labour organisers put forth all their abilities, and the workers all their resources. The Governments of the various colonies just managed to keep the combatants within the law. The organisers were not the ordinary type of working-men; indeed, the fold of labour in Australia includes men of all orders of mind and degrees of education. The hap-hazard conditions of the land bring it about that barristers are miners, doctors-of-medicine store-keepers, and classical scholars

butchers and bakers. Clergymen are found shearing, and bank managers scratching for gold in abandoned gullies. A strike on a large scale in Australia produces, accordingly, a volume of intellectual force not usually in evidence at such junctures in other countries. In the strike referred to, the intellectual activity resulted in disaster. The strike leaders were obliged to recognise the fact; but the question remained, Would they submit? The journalists of the party—and most of the educated men were, one way or another, writers to the newspapers—began devising and publishing schemes whereby the bitter fate might be averted. Gradually an idea of quitting the field in a body shaped itself. Bit by bit it was perfected, and at last stood out boldly as a feasible project.

When the design reached this stage, a propaganda for its general adoption was begun. William Lane, an Englishman by birth, an American by education, and an Australian of several years' standing, who had edited a couple of democratic newspapers in Queensland, led the movement. Around him enthusiasts gathered. Hearers in all parts were inoculated with the idea of breaking away and founding a New Australia. The bush-workers were easily won. Difficulties were stated and frankly discussed. It was made clear that the colony was not to be established or maintained on any merely benevolent footing. Probabilities were estimated, and sixty pounds was fixed as the sum each volunteer should pay towards the cost of the venture. Volunteers might be worth one thousand pounds or more, and if so, all they possessed was demanded of them; but no one on any account whatever was eligible unless he bound himself to pay over sixty pounds before embarking. Volunteers were also obliged to supply proof of sound physical health and of upright moral character, and to satisfy the leaders that they never 'black-legged' in any Australian strike.

The preamble to the agreement signed by each member contains the creed of the community, and though rather diffuse, explains their motives and objects so fairly, that it may be quoted literally:

'Whereas, so long as one depends upon another for leave to work, and so long as the selfishness induced by the uncertainty of living prevents mankind from seeing that it is best for all to ensure one another against all possibility of social degradation, true liberty and happiness are impossible; and whereas the weakness, ignorance, and doubts of society at large are the great barrier in the way of the establishment of such true social order as will ensure every citizen security against want and opportunity to develop to the full the faculties evolving in humanity: Therefore it is desirable and imperative that by a community wherein all labour in common for the common good, actual proof shall be given that under conditions which render it impossible for one to tyrannise over another, and which declare the first duty of all to be the well-being of all, and the sole duty of all to be the well-being of each, men and women can live in comfort, happiness, and intelligence unknown in a society where none can be sure to-day that

they or their children will not starve tomorrow. With this end in view, an Association of workers is hereby instituted, and the accompanying basis for co-operative organisation and articles of Association agreed upon, the signatories intending and expecting to emigrate to another country, there to devote to the movement their possessions and their best endeavours.'

The basis for co-operative production here referred to is stated to be ownership by the community of all the means of production in exchange and distribution, the conduct by the community of all production in exchange and distribution, and the superintendence by the community of all labour-saving co-operatives; it also determines the maintenance by the community of children under guardianship of parents, and maintenance by the community of all sanitary and educational establishments, the saving of all capital needed by the community, and the division of remaining wealth-production among all adult members of the community equally, without regard to sex, age, office, or physical or mental capacity.

The community binds itself to obey in the first instance the laws of the State in which the colony shall be established, and to manage its own local affairs under a system determined by a ballot vote of all its adult members. It sets out with a director, elected by a two-thirds majority of a general ballot, and superintendents elected by a two-thirds majority of departmental ballot. All offices are to be vacated annually, and whenever occupants cease to retain the confidence of their constituents. Machinery for the settlement of disputes is provided, and even expulsion may be decreed by a five-sixths majority of all adult members. Religion will not be officially recognised by the community, but the individuality of every member in all matters where the individuality of others is not affected will be held inviolable. Without prejudice to the liquor question, members pledge themselves to teetotalism until the initial difficulties of settlement have passed and the constitution has been established.

Thus the colony of New Australia makes its beginning. The materials, physical and otherwise, with which it starts give it advantages over similar undertakings. The men of the first batch average five feet nine inches in height and eleven stone in weight. Almost every trade and profession is represented among them. There are farmers, agricultural labourers, engineers, carpenters, smiths, plumbers, medical men, journalists, and schoolmasters. Fortunately or unfortunately, there is not one lawyer, and a clause in the constitution declares the ineligibility of any members of that body.

The character of their Paraguayan home matches, as far as is at present known, the experiences the emigrants were educated into on Australian soil. Timber there is, abundant and of good quality. The land is capable of producing rice, tobacco, coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, sweet-potatoes, and maize. Fruits are easy of cultivation. Oranges, lemons, citrons, bananas, guavas, pine-apples, and all the other products of the old Australia may be made to abound. Cattle may be raised, and sheep-breed-

ing carried on, and every hand may find congenial work. The difficulties to be encountered will, of course, be numerous at the first. They will troop in upon the little band from all quarters and in all shapes. Prophesies of evil may verify themselves, and sunny hopes fade. The real may shame the ideal. The die is cast, however. New Australia has taken its own life in its hands, and will prove 'what the future holds in it.'

## AT MARKET VALUE.\*

## CHAPTER VIII.—DIGRESSIONS SOMEWHAT.

In London, meanwhile, Mr Reginald Hesslegrave, to use his own expressive phrase, was 'going it.' And few young gentlemen with an equally exiguous income, knew how to 'go it' at the same impetuous pace as Mr Reginald Hesslegrave. That very same evening, indeed, as he walked down the Strand arm in arm with his chum, Charlie Owen—the only other fellow in the office who fulfilled to the letter Mr Reginald's exalted ideal of 'what a gentleman ought to be'—he stopped for a moment opposite the blushing window of a well-known sporting paper to observe the list of winners in the first race of the season. Mr Reginald, as is the wont of his kind, had backed the favourite. He drew a long breath of disappointment as he scanned the telegram of results. 'Amber Witch wins in a canter,' he murmured with marked disgust to his sympathising companion. 'A rank outsider!'

'Pipped again?' Charlie Owen inquired in the peculiar dialect at which they were both experts.

And Reginald Hesslegrave answered: 'Pipped again! For a tenner!' with manly resignation. He was sustained under this misfortune, indeed, by the consoling reflection that the 'tenner' he had risked on Yorkshire Lass would come in the end out of Kathleen's pocket. It's a thing to be ashamed of, for a gentleman, of course, to have a sister who is obliged to dabble in paint for a livelihood; but, from the practical point of view, it has its advantages also. And Reggie found it a distinct advantage during the racing season that he was able to draw upon Kathleen's earnings for unlimited loans, which were never repaid, it is true, but which were described as such in order to save undue wear and tear to Mr Reginald's delicate feelings. It doesn't 'look well' to ask your sister point-blank for a present of a ten-pound note; but a loan to that amount, from time to time, to meet a pressing temporary emergency, is a form of advance that never grates for a moment upon the most refined susceptibilities.

'That's a nuisance,' Charlie Owen responded, with a sympathetic wry face; 'for I suppose you counted upon it.'

Now, this was exactly what Mr Reginald had done, after the fashion of the City clerk who fancies himself a judge of horse-flesh; but he wasn't going to acknowledge it.

'It never does to count upon anything in the

glorious uncertainty of racing,' he answered with a bounce, swallowing his disappointment in that resigned spirit which is born of a confident belief that your sister, after all, will have in the end to make good the deficit. 'Though, to be sure, I *was* in need of it; for I've asked Florrie Clarke and her mother to run round to the Gaiety for an hour with me this evening; and I can tell you it comes heavy on a fellow, and no mistake, to settle for the grub for Florrie's mother! She is a dab at lobster salad!'

'Then you're taking them to supper afterwards?' Charlie inquired with admiration. One young fool invariably admires another for his courage and nobility in spending the money he hasn't got, to somebody else's final discomfort and detriment.

Reginald nodded a careless assent. 'To Romano's,' he answered, with justifiable pride in the background of his tone. 'When I do the thing at all, I like to do it properly; and Florrie's the sort of girl, don't you know, who's accustomed to see things done in the very best style; so I mean to go it.'

'What a fellow you are!' Charlie Owen exclaimed with heart-felt admiration. 'After a knock-down blow like this, that would dishearten most chappies!'

Mr Reginald smiled a deprecatory smile of modest self-approval. 'Well, I flatter myself I am a bit of a philosopher,' he admitted with candour, like one who glides lightly over his own acknowledged merits. 'Why don't you come too? There'd be room in my box for you.'

'Does it run to a box, then?' Charlie Owen asked, open-eyed.

And Reggie answered, with an expansive wave of his neatly-gloved hand: 'Do you suppose I'd ask Florrie and her mother to go in the pit? I imagine I know how to do the thing like a gentleman.'

'Well, of course, if you've got a box,' Charlie assented with alacrity, 'one more or less doesn't count. But still—there's the supper!'

Mr Reginald dismissed the sordid suggestion with another dainty wave of his well-gloved left. 'When a gentleman asks another gentleman to sup with him,' he observed with sententious dignity, 'it isn't usual for his guests to make inquiries beforehand as to the cost of the entertainment.' After which noble rebuke, Charlie Owen felt it would be positive bad manners not to accept with effusion; and was lost in wonder, delight, and awe—as Reggie intended he should be—at the magnanimity of a chappy who, after a loss like that, could immediately launch out into fresh extravagance by inviting a friend to a quite unnecessary and expensive banquet. What a splendid creature the fast young man really is, after all! and how nobly he dispenses unlimited hospitality to all and sundry on his relations' money!

So that evening at eight saw Mr Reginald Hesslegrave in full evening dress and a neat hired brougham, stopping at the door of the Gaiety Theatre to deposit Mrs Clarke and her daughter Florrie. The party, to be sure, was nothing if not correct; for Mamma was there to ensure the utmost proprieties; and Miss Florrie herself, who was a well-conducted young lady, had no idea of doing anything more decided than accepting

a box for nothing as affection's gift from the devoted Reggie. Miss Florrie's Papa was an eminently respectable West-end money-lender; and Miss Florrie and her Mamma were practically used, in the way of business, partly as decoy ducks for unwary youth, and partly as a means of recovering at once, in presents and entertainments, a portion of the money advanced by Papa on those familiar philanthropic principles of 'note-of-hand at sight, without inquiry, and no security,' which so often rouse one's profound esteem and wonder in the advertisement columns of the daily papers. Unfortunately, however, it is found, for the most part, in this hard business world of ours, that philanthropy like this can only be made to pay on the somewhat exorbitant terms of sixty per cent, deducted beforehand. But Mr Reginald, as it happened, was far too small game for either Miss Florrie or her Papa to fly at; his friendship for the young lady was distinctly a platonic one. She and her Mamma used him merely as an amiable young fool who could fill in the odd evenings between more serious engagements, when Papa's best clients took her to the opera with Mamma, and presented her with a brooch or an amethyst bracelet out of the forty per cent. which alone remained to them from Papa's munificence. Not that Miss Florrie's conduct was ever anything but the pink of propriety: with a connection like Papa's, it was always on the cards that she might end (with good luck) by becoming My Lady, in lieu of accumulated interest on bills renewed; and was it likely that Miss Florrie was going to fling away a first-rate chance in life like that by ill-timed entanglements with a penniless clerk in a stockbroker's office? Miss Florrie thought not: she knew her market worth too well for such folly: she might flirt, but she perfectly understood where to stop flirtation: meanwhile, she found Mr Reginald Hesslegrave an agreeable and harmless companion, and an excellent wedge of an unobtrusive sort for attacking the narrow opening into certain grades of society. It 'looks well' to be seen about with Mamma in the company of an excellently connected young man of no means at all; people can never accuse you, then, of unmitigated fortune-hunting.

Miss Florrie and her Mamma were most charming that evening. Mrs Hesslegrave herself would have been forced to admit they were really most charming. The Mamma was as well dressed as could reasonably be expected—that is to say, not much more over-dressed than in the nature of things a money-lender's wife must be; and her diamonds, Charlie Owen remarked with delight, were greatly noted and commented upon by the feminine occupants of neighbouring boxes. As for Reginald Hesslegrave, he felt the evening was what he would himself have described as 'a gigantic success.' 'It's all going off very well,' he observed with nervous pride to Charlie Owen as they paced the corridor, cigarette in mouth, during the interval between the acts.

And Charlie Owen, patting his back, made answer emphatically: 'Going off very well, man! Why, it's a thundering triumph! What a fellow you are, to be sure! Ices in the box and everything! Clinking! simply clinking! The eldest son of a Duke couldn't have done the thing

better. It's made a distinct impression upon the Clarkes, I can tell you.'

'You think so?' Reggie asked, with a proud flush of satisfaction.

'Think so?' Charlie repeated once more. 'Why, I can see it with half a glance. Florrie's gone on you, that's where it is. Visibly to the naked eye, that girl's clean gone on you!'

Mr Reginald returned to the box feeling half an inch taller. He knew himself a lady-killer. And he noticed with pride that Miss Florrie and her Mamma were on terms of bowing acquaintance with a great many people in the stalls and dress circle; the very best people; gentlemen for the most part, it is true, but still, a sprinkling of ladies, including among them Mrs Algry Redburn, who ought by rights to be Lady Axminster. And though the ladies returned Miss Florrie's bows and smiles with a tinge of coldness, and seemed disinclined to catch the eagle eye of her Mamma—who was a stoutish matron of a certain age and uncertain waist—it was an undeniable fact that those who did catch it were for the most part women of title and of social distinction, in the fastest set: so that Mr Reginald felt himself in excellent society.

As they were leaving the theatre, while Mrs Clarke and Florrie went off in search of their wraps from the ladies' cloak-room, Reggie drew Charlie Owen mysteriously aside for a moment. 'Look here, old fellow,' he said coaxingly, in a whispered undertone, button-holing his friend as he spoke; 'you're coming on to supper with us. Could you manage to lend me a couple of sovereigns for a day or two?'

Charlie Owen looked glum. He pursed his under lip. Like Bardolph's tailor, he liked not the security. 'What's it for?' he asked dubiously.

Reggie made a clean breast of it. 'Well, the brougham and things have run into a little more than I expected,' he answered with a forced smile; 'and of course we must open a bottle of cham.; and if Mrs Clarke wants a second—she's a fish at fizz, I know—it'd be awkward, don't you see, if I hadn't quite cash enough to pay the waiter.'

'It would so,' Charlie responded, screwing up a sympathetic but exceedingly doubtful face.

'Do you happen to have a couple of quid about you?' Reggie demanded once more, with an anxious air.

Charlie Owen melted. 'Well, I have,' he answered slowly. 'But mind you, I shall want them on Saturday without fail, to pay my landlady. She's a demon for her rent. Raises blazes if it runs on. Will insist on it weekly. Can you promise me faithfully to let me have the oof back by Saturday?'

Reggie drew a sigh of relief. 'Honour bright!' he answered, clutching hard at the straw. 'It's all square, I assure you. I've remittances coming.'

'Where from?' Charlie continued, not wishing to be hard, but still anxious for 'the collateral,' as Florrie's Papa would have put it.

'Oh, I've telegraphed to-day to my people at Venice,' Reggie responded airily. But 'my people' of course was a euphemism for 'my sister.'

'And got an answer?' Charlie insisted. He

didn't want to seem mean, but business is business, and he desired to know on what expectations precisely he was risking his money.

'Yes ; here it is,' Reggie replied, drawing it out, somewhat sheepishly, from the recesses of his pocket. He didn't like to show it, of course ; but he saw too well that on no other terms could he be spared the eternal disgrace of having to refuse Florrie Clarke's Mamma a second bottle of *Veuve Clicquot*, should she choose to demand it.

Charlie ran his eye over the telegram. It was short but satisfactory. 'Entirely disapprove. Am sending the money. This is the last time. Remember.—KATHLEEN.'

'She always says that,' Mr Reginald interposed in an apologetic undertone.

'Oh, dear yes ; I know ; it's a way they have,' Charlie responded with a tolerant smile, as one who was well acquainted with the strange fads of one's people. 'How much did you ask her for ?'

'A tenner,' Mr Reginald responded.

Charlie Owen drew the coins with slow deliberation from his dress waistcoat pocket. 'Well, this is a debt of honour,' he said in a solemn voice, handing them over impressively. 'You'll pay me off, of course, before you waste any money on paying bills or landlords and such-like.'

Reggie slipped the two sovereigns into his trousers pocket with a sigh of relief. 'You are a brick, Charlie !' he exclaimed, turning away quite happy, and prepared, as is the manner of such young gentlemen in general, to spend the whole sum recklessly at a single burst on whatever first offered, now he was relieved for the moment from his temporary embarrassment. For it is the way of your Reggies to treat a loan as so much cash in hand, dropped down from heaven, and to disburse it freely on the nearest recipient in light-hearted anticipation of the next emergency.

The supper was universally acknowledged to be the success of the evening. It often is, in fact, where the allowance of *Veuve Clicquot* is sufficiently unstinted. Mrs Clarke was most affable, most increasingly affable ; and as to Miss Florrie, a pretty little round-faced *ingénue*, with a vast crop of crisp black hair, cut short and curled, she was delightful company. It was her rôle in life to flirt ; and she did it for the love of it. Reginald Hesslegrave was a distinctly good-looking young man, very well connected ; and she really liked him. Not, of course, that she would ever for a moment have dreamed of throwing herself away for life on a man without the means to keep a carriage ; but Miss Florrie was one of those modern young ladies who sternly dissociate their personal likes and dislikes from their matrimonial schemes ; and as a person to sup with, to talk with, and to flirt with, she really liked Master Reggie—nay, more, she admired him. For he knew how to 'go it' ; and ability for 'going it' was in Miss Florrie's eyes the prince of the virtues. It was the one that enabled a man, however poor in reality, to give her the greatest amount of what she lived for—amusement. So Florrie flooded Reggie with the light of her round black eyes till he was fairly intoxicated with her. She played her

crisp curls at him with considerable effect, and was charmed when he succumbed to them. 'Twas a pity he wasn't the heir to a hundred thousand pounds. If he had been, Miss Florrie thought, she might have got Papa to discount it offhand on post-obits, and have really settled down to a quiet life of balls and theatres in his agreeable society.

So much smitten was Reggie, indeed, that before the end of the evening, under the expansive influence of that excellent *Veuve Clicquot*, he remarked chaffingly to Florrie, at a moment when Mrs Clarke was deep in talk with Charlie Owen : 'I tell you what it is, Miss Clarke—or rather Florrie—I shall call you Florrie—some day, you and I will have to make a match of it !'

Miss Florrie did not resent this somewhat abrupt and inartistic method of broaching an important and usually serious subject. On the contrary, being an easy-going soul, she accepted it as a natural compliment to her charms, and smiled at it good-humouredly. But she answered none the less, with a toss of the crisp black curls : 'Well, if we're ever to do that, Mr Hesslegrave, you must find the wherewithal first ; for I can tell you I want a carriage and a yacht and a house-boat. The man for my heart is the man with a house-boat. As soon as you're in a position to set up a house-boat, you may invite me to share it with you ; and then—she looked at him archly with a witching smile—"I may consider my answer.'

She was a taking little thing !—there was no denying it. 'Very bad style,' so the ladies in the stalls remarked to one another, as they scanned her through their opera-glasses ; 'but awfully taking !' And Reginald Hesslegrave found her so. From that moment forth, it became his favourite day-dream that he had made a large fortune at a single stroke (on the turf, of course), and married the owner of the crisp black curls. So deep-rooted did this ideal become to him, indeed, that he set to work at once to secure the large fortune. And how ? By working hard day and night, and saving and investing ? Oh, dear me, no ! Such *bourgeois* methods are not for the likes of Mr Reginald Hesslegrave, who prided himself upon being a perfect gentleman. By risking Kathleen's hard-earned money on the Derby favourite, and accepting 'tips' as to a 'dark horse' for the Leger !

#### BANK-SAFES AND BURGLARS.

In one of his sensational detective stories, M. Du Boisgobey, the French novelist, hatches an intricate plot which turns on an attempt to break into a banker's safe in Paris. One of the burglars was a lady, who, on touching a piece of the machinery securing the safe, caused it to operate and hold her in its vice-like grasp. Her comrade in crime cut off her hand rather than let her be caught in the act of robbery ; and so the tale takes its name from the main point of interest, and is known as '*La Main Coupée*' (*The Severed Hand*).

It is a long way off from the complex and powerful mechanism of the modern safes, which are constructed to defy alike burglars and fire,

to the times when man could not trust his fellow-man, but must needs hide his possessions for safety in secret places. There is no surer test of civilisation than the measure of pecuniary confidence which members of a community repose in one another. With half-civilised peoples like the Hindus gold is either buried or worked into ornaments.

The Emperor of Annam has hit on a peculiar device for keeping the royal reserve secure against burglars, and even against himself. This is the plan of the uncivilised potentate: he causes his treasure to be placed in hollowed-out trunks of trees, which are thrown into a pool of water within his palace walls. In the water are kept a number of absolutely incorruptible guardians in the shape of crocodiles, which will eat alive any person who attempts to meddle with the submerged treasure. When it becomes indispensable to draw on this novel style of bank, the crocodiles have to be killed; but this can only be done with the Emperor's permission, and after the matter has been duly approved by the Minister of Finance.

In past days in Scotland, when the 'Old Bank,' as it was termed, was located in Gourlay's House, Old Bank Close, Edinburgh, precautions were evidently adopted to secure the safety of the cash in the bank's strong-chest. When the 'Old Bank' house was taken down in the first quarter of the century, it was found that all the shutters communicated by wire with a row of bells in an attic, which was assumed to be a plan put in practice long ago of sounding an alarm in the event of burglary. This bank had also a guard armed with flintlocks and bayonets as an outside protection.

The Bank of England is watched nightly by a guard of about fifty men from the Household troops, under the command of an officer, who usually march from Wellington or St George's Barracks. They patrol the spacious quadrangles of the bank, and do sentry-duty over allotted spaces till the morning, when they are relieved on the arrival of some members of the bank's staff. The officer in command is allowed dinner for himself and a friend, including the provision of a bottle of the bank's special old port. The men are also supplied with the needful refection. Besides this military guard, two clerks remain on duty all night at the bank, as well as all day on Sunday, and these 'Watch Clerks' must not go to sleep. Their duty is to move about from building to building inspecting the various rooms, to see that all goes well. Several of the higher officials also sleep on the premises, ready to be summoned at a moment's notice.

The Bank of France is also guarded by soldiers, who do sentry-duty outside the bank, a watch being likewise kept within its precincts. A former practice of protecting this bank was to get masons to wall up the doors of the vaults in the cellar with hydraulic mortar so soon as the money was deposited each day in these receptacles. The water was then turned on, and kept running until the cellar was flooded. A burglar would thus be obliged to work in a diving-suit, and break down a cement wall before he could even begin to plunder the vaults. When the bank officers arrived each morning,

the water was drawn off, the masonry torn down, and the vaults opened.

The Bank of Germany, like most other German public buildings, has a military guard to protect it. In a very strongly fortified military fortress at Spandau is kept the great war-treasure of the Imperial Government, part of the French Indemnity, amounting to several million pounds.

In the United States there are thousands of banks, which are all on a much smaller scale than in Great Britain, as the banks in the States have no branches. The amount of bonds payable to 'bearer' is so considerable, that American financiers, as well as bankers, largely make use of safes for their custody. Among various plans devised to keep out the burglar, one is employed in America, where large strong-rooms or safe-deposits are so arranged as to be filled with steam at a moment's notice in time of riots. This is a form of burglary which the Americans greatly fear; for when a lawless mob get the upper hand in a city, it takes very little to divert their energies to the pillage of a place where cash is kept. Another plan in use for preventing a burglar from entering a cash-safe is to arrange for a malodorous compound issuing out when the burglar attempts to tamper with the safe.

Many devices have been adopted for rendering safer burglar-proof. The material used in their construction must be, as Mr Harry W. Chubb remarked in a recent lecture before the Society of Arts in London, 'sufficiently hard to resist drilling or other cutting instrument, and yet at the same time sufficiently tough so as not to become fractured under percussion or pressure.' Cast-iron safes and doors were formerly in vogue, but gave place to those made of rolled iron. Steel is now used, plates or slabs of that metal being made after the model of warships' armour—that is, with layers of high carbon welded and rolled in between layers of iron or steel.

The Americans appear to believe in rolled plates of varying degrees of hardness riveted or bolted together for their safe-doors. The round bolt is in almost universal use with them, these bolts being secured by two or more keyless combination locks, and by a chronometer lock, commonly called a 'timer.' Mr Chubb says that no American bank or other safes of any importance are without 'timers,' and he computes the number of those in use at no fewer than from fourteen to fifteen thousand. The combination lock bears a certain number; but if the 'timer' be wound up for the night, the burglar cannot force an entrance till the hour for which the 'timer' has been set arrives. Another kind of combination lock is one which has several movable steel buttons, upon which are engraved all the letters of the alphabet. To open the safe, one must, before inserting the key, replace the letter on the buttons in the exact order in which they stood when the safe-door was locked.

It may be asked what agencies burglars employ for breaking into safes. The older methods were by drilling, blowpipes, gunpowder, tunnelling, and such-like; but the more modern methods of these *chevaliers d'industrie* are

by the application, where possible, of nitro-glycerine and dynamite. The difficulty attending the use of the two last-named agents is the noise of the explosion they cause, so that they can only be resorted to in out-of-the-way places. In order to introduce nitro-glycerine through the door of a safe, the burglars used to press or wedge in the spindles of the locks or the bolt handles, so as to leave sufficient space for injecting the yellow fluid. Then piling books and office furniture in front of the door, they calmly awaited the blow-up. Science, however, has enabled safe-makers to dispense with spindle-holes, and to work the main bolts by the aid of powerful springs enclosed in a box mounted inside the safe-door. The apparatus for throwing and bringing back the bolts is self-acting, and highly successful in its operation, so that the burglar cannot now carry on 'his felonious little game' of introducing nitro-glycerine into safes so protected.

If it be further asked, What of the burglar's ordinary tools and equipment?—we may reply in the words of Sir George Hayter Chubb, Chairman of the well-known Chubb & Sons' Lock and Safe Company, who thus answers the question in his interesting contribution to burglar literature entitled 'Protection from Fire and Thieves': 'A professional burglar's tools comprise skeleton keys, silent matches, a dark-lantern, a wax taper, a palette knife used for opening windows by pushing the fastening back; a small crowbar, generally made in two pieces to screw together, and with one end forked; a centre-bit, and a carpet bag. If the object of attack is a safe, then to these must be added chisels and steel wedges of different sizes, an "alderman," or large crowbar, a "Jack-in-the-box," some aquafortis, and sometimes gunpowder for blowing open locks. Besides providing himself with tools, the burglar will often wear a "reversible," or coat which can be worn inside out, each side being a different colour, so that, if he happened to be noticed, he will turn his coat in some quiet corner, and become another man to all outward appearance.'

As a rule, burglars work in gangs when engaged in safe-breaking. First, the situation of the safe to be operated on is ascertained, then the nature of the safe itself, whether wholly lined with steel or iron, or with stone walls; then the character of the precautions adopted by the owners of the safe for its protection, such as sentries and electric alarm bells. When it has been arranged to proceed to active measures, the various duties are assigned to the respective 'cracksmen,' one important rôle being that of watching the police guardian as he goes his rounds. Sometimes it is a work of months to get to close quarters, everything depending on the difficulties to be surmounted. Some years ago, it took about half a year before a gang of robbers succeeded in first winning the confidence of and then corrupting the office-keeper of a bank in New York. He possessed the outer keys which gave admission to the interior, and put the thieves within striking distance of the safe-door. The robbers thus admitted plied their burglarious instruments from a Saturday afternoon till Monday morning.

By far the most ingenious and daring class of burglaries is that which has been accomplished by means of tunnelling or mining. This operation implies long-sustained and arduous toil, not to speak of danger, while the scientific qualities displayed are really admirable and worthy of a better use. There is a spice of romance about safe-breaking by tunnelling, and we may therefore narrate one unsuccessful and two successful instances of this kind of robbery.

A few years ago a cashier in one of the National Banks of the United States, in New Mexico, was busy at work one evening in the office when his quick ear detected some curious sounds. They seemed to proceed from a subterranean region; and he was not long in concluding that robbers must be tunnelling from an adjoining building to the vault in the bank. Guards were immediately posted in and around the building. Those within observed the masonry of the bank to be giving way. Meantime, the robbers appeared to be hard at work, and quite unaware that they were being watched. At one in the morning, a Mexican volunteered to descend into the bank cellar so as to discover the actual situation. Scarcely had he gone a few paces down the stairs, when he met some one coming up. The Mexican fired without saying a word and shot the man dead. It was observed that he was one of the masons who had built the bank, and therefore was acquainted with its vulnerable points. The report of firearms alarmed his accomplices, for they fled, and escaped. The tunnel gave evidence of long and patient work on the part of the robbers. It was sixty feet in length, constructed on scientific principles, contained provisions, water, and a full outfit of mining tools, and must have been three months in making. The robbery appeared to be planned for the time of the month when the bank received large remittances of currency and coin.

An extraordinary and daring robbery was that which took place at the Central Bank of Western India, Hong-kong, in 1865, when the thieves succeeded in getting clear off with gold and specie to the extent of nearly fifty thousand pounds. The robbers must have been at work for some weeks before they entered the bank's treasury. Their principal labour was in constructing a tunnel of sixty feet from an adjacent drain to a spot exactly below the floor of the bank's treasury-vault. A perpendicular shaft of ten feet of sufficient diameter was then made, to permit of the passage of one man to reach the granite boulders on which the floor of the vault rested. These gave way through being undermined; and a flag being forced up, entrance to the vault was at once obtained. Two boxes were removed containing gold bars or ingots marked with the bank's stamp, as well as all the paper money, some bags of dollars, and a box of ten-cent pieces. No fewer than between twenty and thirty men were arrested on suspicion. One of them had six thousand dollars in his possession, and two bars of gold bearing the bank's mark. The robbery was effected between a Saturday and Sunday; and the first thing that roused suspicion was the fact of a little boy

trying to sell a bar of gold to a hawker in one of the bazaars in Hong-kong. A gentleman who was passing asked where he got the gold, and the boy replied that it had been found at a certain place. He gave the youth what he asked for it—namely, a dollar—and then informed the police.

Some years ago, an equally daring robbery took place at the late Cape of Good Hope Bank, Kimberley. One Sunday morning the manager of this bank opened his cash-safe to get a parcel of diamonds which were under his custody, when he found several loose bags of money lying about the safe floor. This rather puzzled him; but on looking around, he spied an opening in the wall of the safe, and came to the conclusion that a burglar had been at work. The police were applied to; and they found that the opening in the wall communicated with a large street drain in the vicinity. The total sum abstracted from the bank was about four thousand pounds; but on the drain being explored, about fifteen bags of silver, of the value of one hundred pounds each, were recovered.

Naturally interested in everything affecting not only the fabrication of bank-safes but also burglaries breaking into them, the Messrs Chubb of London sent a representative to Kimberley to gather up any details of the robbery which would be of service to science in coping with crime. This gentleman reported that the strong-room in question was composed of masonry, and that it was considered one of the strongest in South Africa. The walls of the room were three feet thick; and to get to these walls the burglars had first to penetrate through an outer wall four feet thick, and through three foundation walls each two feet thick, all these walls being constructed of solid cement and brickwork. There was also about twenty feet of earth to tunnel through; and the hole could not be made in a direct line, but had to be constructed with various turns, so as to enable the burglars with miners' tools to get through the softest places. The large drain through which the burglars approached their task opened out into a street, so that the thieves were provided with a convenient outlet. It was believed that a large retriever dog helped in the robbery, as it was seen to run out of the culvert with something hanging round its neck; but after being followed for some distance, all trace of it was lost.

The conviction is forced on one that as wooden vessels have given place to iron or steel plated armour ships, so, in the construction of bank-safes, stone walls, however thick, must now yield to those of steel. No masonry, be it ever so good, is proof against undermining or assault, and true security consists in having a safe that will withstand all the attempts of the burglar from whatever quarter they arise. In a recent attack on a bank-safe in Paris, there were observed in front of the safe-door the fag-ends of numerous cigarettes, and the fragments of a feast, several empty wine bottles, chicken bones, &c., all testifying to the delicacy of the French burglar's palate and his love of good cheer. They also

evidenced that the burglars had been many hours engaged in their attempt, but had been foiled because the safe-door and safe-lock which they assailed was of good, solid, English make.

### THE BURGOMASTER VAN TROON.

#### CHAPTER III.—CONCLUSION.

MISS WIMBUSH was a confirmed nomad. Since her father's death, when she was quite a young woman, she had had no fixed home. Much of the Continent was as well known to her as her own country; but of late years her peregrinations had been mostly confined within the limits of the United Kingdom. She was acquainted with numbers of people, at all of whose houses she was a welcome guest. Her visits among her friends were varied by pleasant little intervals of Bohemianism on her own account, when, accompanied by Mitcham, her maid, who had long ago arrived at years of discretion, she would take up her quarters for a brief while at this hotel or the other boarding-house, and revel in the luxury of making fresh acquaintances, and in studying the whims and humours of the heterogeneous mob of strangers with whom at such times she was brought into temporary contact.

But wherever Miss Wimbush went, on all her travels both at home and abroad, she was accompanied by one article which was altogether outside the scope of an ordinary traveler's baggage. The article in question was a picture, presumably painted by none other than the great Peter Paul Rubens himself, seeing that it bore his monogram, with the date of 1620, in one corner of the canvas, and was said to be a portrait of the Burgomaster Van Troon. It was a well-ascertained fact that Peter Paul painted two portraits of the functionary in question, one of which was to be seen any day in a certain gallery at the Hague; while the other, which was said to be the superior of the two, had been lost sight of for the last seventy or eighty years; neither had any of the numerous Exhibitions of the last quarter of a century, consisting of pictures brought together from far and wide, sufficed to reveal its whereabouts. Consequently, could it be proved that the picture Miss Wimbush carried about with her was really the missing 'Burgomaster,' then did she possess a prize which she might well value and deem worthy of every possible care.

As we have learned, however, the verdict of Mr Piljoy, the eminent art critic, was wholly opposed to such a belief. Neither was he alone in his opinion, which had been backed up by other connoisseurs of repute who had been allowed as a great favour to examine the portrait. That it was a forgery and of a comparatively modern date, they were all pretty well agreed.

Meanwhile, Miss Wimbush went serenely on her way, wholly indifferent to the opinions of Mr Piljoy and his *confrères*. The 'Burgomaster' was one of several pictures bequeathed her by her father. The others she had promptly disposed of; but the supposed Rubens she had made up her mind to keep. She knew that her father had had a very special admiration

for it, and had regarded it as the gem of his small but choice collection; and for his sake she determined never to part from it, unless some unforeseen necessity should one day compel her to do so.

Therefore was it that wherever Miss Wimbush went the picture went with her, it being Mitcham's special and particular duty to look after its safety *en route* from one stopping-place to another. It was enclosed in a mahogany case, the key of which the spinster never let out of her own possession. As a matter of course, her singular infatuation for what was commonly reported to be a worthless daub caused her to be laughed at behind her back; and Edgar Fairclough was by no means singular in thinking that, however sane and clear-headed Aunt Sarah might be in all other matters, she was undoubtedly 'a little bit cracked' as far as the burgomaster's portrait was concerned.

On quitting Pendragon Square, after listening to her niece's tale of woe, Aunt Sarah was driven to the boarding-house where she was in the habit of taking up her quarters when in town. In the sitting-room, busy with her needle, she found Mitcham, whom long years of faithful service had almost elevated into the position of companion. Miss Wimbush sat down on the nearest chair, and, although the evening was a chilly one, fanned herself for some seconds without speaking. Then all at once she said, in a voice which was not without a touch of tragic pathos: 'Mitcham, the "Burgomaster" and I are going to part.'

If some one had fired off a pistol close by Mitcham's head, she could hardly have been more startled. She gave a half-jump off her chair and a great gasp. 'Law! ma'am, I hope not, I'm sure,' she said. 'Whatever can have happened to make you think of such a thing? I always felt sure he would keep us company for the rest of our mortal lives.'

'I cannot tell you what it is that has happened; it is not altogether my own affair.—But there is no other way—none whatever.' Her voice broke a little as she finished speaking. Save for a sympathetic sigh, Mitcham remained silent. She was one of those invaluable people who know when to speak and when to hold their tongue.

Presently Miss Wimbush said: 'I am tired, and shall retire at once.'

'About supper, ma'am?' ventured Mitcham. It was her mistress's favourite meal.

'Pray, pray, don't talk to me about such things as suppers,' quavered the poor lady. 'I feel as if I should never want to eat another as long as I live.'

If her mistress could have seen Mitcham three minutes later, she would have opened her eyes very wide indeed. A broad smile of satisfaction lighted up the waiting-woman's usually impassive features. 'So we shall get rid of you at last, shall we, you ugly, good-for-nothing old noosance,' she said aloud. 'And a precious good riddance, too, for I've had a sickener of you, and no mistake.'

It was close upon noon next day when a cab stopped at the door of Mr Henriques, a well-known picture-dealer. From it alighted

Miss Wimbush, to whom the precious 'Burgomaster' in its case was then handed by Mitcham. The dealer and the spinster were already known to each other. It was to Mr Henriques that the latter had sold the pictures bequeathed her by her father—that is to say, all save the so-called Rubens.

'Good-morning, Mr Henriques,' said Miss Wimbush as she marched into the fine-art emporium. 'It is some years since we met, but it is possible that you have not quite forgotten me.'

'I have by no means forgotten you, madam,' replied the dealer with a smile and a deferential bow. 'The reminiscences of our last interview were of too agreeable a kind to allow of my readily doing that.'

'Which means, I suppose, that you made a very agreeable profit out of your transaction with me.'

'Ah, ha!' laughed the dealer softly, with the air of a person who has just been told a good joke, and with that he drew forward a chair for his visitor. He was a little dried-up man, with a hook nose and very bright beady eyes, and with something about him that put people in mind of an ancient bird of prey.

'I have at length made up my mind to dispose of my precious Rubens,' went on the spinster—that is to say, of the portrait of the Burgomaster Van Troon by that great genius, with a view of which I favoured you on the occasion of our last meeting.'

The dealer rubbed his hands and bowed again. He was a man of many bows. 'Hem—I have not forgotten the work in question,' he remarked with a dry smile.

'I should think you have not, indeed,' said Miss Wimbush with decision. 'Well, here it is,' she added, as she proceeded to unlock the mahogany case. 'Now, examine it carefully, and then tell me how much that elastic article you call your conscience will allow you to offer me for it.' With that she planted the open case on an opposite chair, and sitting bolt upright, stared frowningly at the little dealer.

Apparently there was no need for Mr Henriques to examine it carefully; he had done that in days gone by. All he did now was to satisfy himself that it was the same picture he had seen before. Then he turned to his visitor.

'Really, madam, with all deference to you, you must permit me to say that this is not a class of article such as I am in the habit of dealing in. My patrons want originals, not copies. Still, in consideration of the fact that madam and I have done business on a prior occasion, I do not mind offering a ten-pound note for this—this copy.' He spoke deferentially, but firmly.

'So, you dare to call it a copy, do you?' snapped Miss Wimbush.

The dealer bowed.—'And not a first-rate copy either, if madam will allow me to say so.'

'Well, Mr Henriques, you are right. It is a copy and a daub into the bargain; and so I made sure that nobody would think it worth stealing. Be good enough to lift it out of its case, and then take the canvas out of the frame. I have a special reason for asking this.'

Wondering somewhat, the dealer did as requested. 'Now,' said Miss Wimbush, 'although you may not be aware of it, you hold two canvases in your hands. If you will carefully separate the upper one from the lower, you will see what you will see.'

With deft fingers Mr Henriques proceeded to do as he was bidden. On the upper canvas being removed there was disclosed to view the undoubted original, of which that had been merely an inferior copy. And how immense was the difference between the two! Now for the first time one seemed to know what sort of man the Burgomaster Van Troon had really been. Such as Rubens had conceived him to be, there he was for all the world to become acquainted with. It was a face to dwell in one's memory for years (with its peaked beard, its furred gown, and its gold chain and badge of office); plain to the verge of ugliness, if one merely had regard to the features; stern and severely composed, and yet informed through and through with a spirit of high resolve and determined majesty. It may have been that the artist discerned in the face of his sitter a force of latent possibilities such as circumstances had never brought fully into play, but which yet were there, awaiting an hour which perchance might never strike, although the man himself might only be dimly aware of that which was clear to the intuition of genius.

Having placed the canvas on an easel, the dealer fell back a pace or two and drew a deep breath. He knew a masterpiece when he saw it, no man better, and for a little while he remained lost in admiration. 'Madam,' he said at length, 'we have here in verity the celebrated "Burgomaster" which has been lost to the world for so many years. I will not be so impertinent as to ask by what happy chance it came into your possession; it is enough to know that it is here. Am I to understand, madam, that it is your intention to honour me by placing this *chef-d'œuvre* in my hands with a view to finding a purchaser?'

What Mr Henriques was presently given to understand was, that Miss Wimbush had no immediate intention of disposing of the 'Burgomaster' out and out. What she wanted was an immediate advance of a thousand pounds on the security of the picture, with the proviso that should she not be in a position to repay the amount in full, with interest, by the end of a couple of years, the Rubens should in that case become the absolute property of the dealer.

After a little demur, Mr Henriques assented to the proposed terms. An agreement was thereupon drawn up, signed, and witnessed—to be stamped an hour later at Somerset House—and presently Miss Wimbush went her way, taking with her a cheque, made out to 'bearer,' for one thousand pounds. Mitcham and the cab were in waiting, and from the dealer's they drove direct to the bank. The spinster's face was hidden in part by her veil, but the spasmodic twitching of her mouth did not pass unnoticed by the waiting-woman, nor the two large tears which, a few seconds later, dropped into her lap.

At the bank, Miss Wimbush changed her

cheque for notes, and was driven thence to Pendragon Square. Fairclough had left home an hour before. It would be a painful thing for Aunt Sarah to have to confess that the belief of years was irrevocably shattered, and that her cherished Rubens was condemned as an undoubted fraud, and he had no desire to be a witness of her humiliation. Besides, in his own more personal matters, he found room enough for bitter thoughts. That morning had brought him a note from Verschoyle asking him to dine with the Captain at his club on the morrow, which was equivalent to intimating that a settlement there and then between the two would be looked upon as a necessity. He was depressed and miserable. The morrow would see his home broken up; and the absolute need of coming to an understanding of some kind with Verschoyle a few hours later, weighed heavily upon him.

The street lamps had been lighted a full hour when he got back home, by which time Aunt Sarah had come and gone. Of the joyful surprise which awaited him we have no space here to tell. The sudden revulsion tried his manhood as it had rarely been tried before. Miss Wimbush had left behind her not only money enough to enable him to settle with Captain Verschoyle, but enough to pay for the redemption of the necklace as well.

It was November before Major Stainforth put in an appearance at Pendragon Square; and when he did, it was to ask his god-daughter to return him the diamond necklace and accept in lieu of it a bank-note for a thousand pounds. There had been a feud of many years' standing between himself and his sister, which had now been made up, and as a proof that it was so, he was desirous of presenting her with the necklace, which, as having at one time belonged to her mother, might almost be looked upon as hers by right.

The note had not been more than twenty-four hours in Clara's possession before the 'Burgomaster' was redeemed and carried in triumph to Pendragon Square, where for the future it found a home, Miss Wimbush, to the secret joy of Mitcham, having decided no longer to run the risk of losing, or being robbed of, so precious a possession in the course of her many journeys and fro.

#### IN SEARCH OF AN OLD CHURCH.

THE afternoon of our search for Narrowseas Church was fine and warm: one half of the sky was a deep tranquil blue; the other half of pure fleecy white, in shape like an archangel's pinion. A church is not ordinarily an object to be easily overlooked in that part of Southern England where the downs slope fold after fold, like so many petrified waves, towards the Channel. There were no cliffs to shelter, no 'chines' to conceal it. On our right the view was unobstructed to the low chalk range on which Hardy's Monument is a landmark: on our left the country fell away to the Little Sea or Backwater, beyond which rose the famous Pebble Beach; while still farther off glittered the blue waters of the West

Bay. It was not until St Mildred's Chapel with its Beacon Tower began to be well defined against the western horizon, that one of the travellers ventured to express to the driver a doubt of the route he had chosen. But, as he expressed himself with all the confidence of untrammelled ignorance, the searchers relapsed into contented enjoyment of the sunny fields, hedgerows, and pastures, in some of which the steam plough was busy 'huzzin and mazin' them; while in others the haymakers were turning and tossing the late haycrop.

It was after exchanging salutations with a row of merry sunburnt children perched on a high gate, within which their elders were seated on the grass enjoying their 'four-hours' rest and refreshment—it was immediately after this ovation that, descending a sharp hill and turning abruptly to our left, we entered quite unexpectedly, but not quite unannounced, into an unmistakable farmyard. Dogs barked, geese hissed, a flock of pigeons rose *en masse*, as the cab came perforce to a stand-still, a five-barred gate in front of it, and no room to turn the vehicle in. Here the driver—a young fellow, with weak Champagne-bottle shoulders, and a feeble flickering smile—confessed he was a stranger to these parts, but thought he had followed the directions his master had given him.

Presently, our embarrassment was relieved by a woman who appeared from an outhouse milk-pail in hand. It was like getting a view through a tunnel to catch a sight of her face in the depths of her sun-bonnet, until she shaded it up with her hand as she exclaimed: 'Narr'seas Church! What did you do a-comin' on hereaway for Narr'seas Church? You do have left it miles thereaway behind-like.' She then opened the gate, and told the driver to drive 'un in, and turn un round-like.' This being accomplished, she showered advice upon us and our crest-fallen Jehu, the latter part of which—'You've o'ny t'ask as you do goo; any vool ull tell ye,'—we acted upon religiously.

Men, women, and children were interrogated: the men mostly answered with a jerk of their shoulders and a gruff 'Down yender,' the women—Heaven bless them!—answered with a diffused politeness that generally made it necessary for them to hold on to the vehicle while they explained that there were two roads by which we might reach Narrows seas Church; only, one possessed the drawback of being impassable for carriages. The children simply gaped wide and ran away, reminding us of a cock we once saw speeding off open-mouthed, after having dipped his beak into an egg full of mustard, artfully prepared to cure this Saturnian fowl of his trick of devouring his own offspring.

Having retraced our steps some considerable distance, we were directed to drive through a pair of iron gates set wide open, and with pillars of iron surmounted by the bent arm and clenched gauntlet that told of baronial ownership. A very short distance brought us to a row of stone-built, thatch-roofed cottages. Having descended to make inquiries for the still invisible church, we were encouraged to find that we had only to 'go for'ard.' Forward we accordingly went,

admiring the taste of some of the cottagers who, having scanty front gardens on which to expend their care, had planted hardy flowers on the bank on the opposite side of the road to their dwellings. After the row of cottages came a low wall topped by the green plumes and pink blossoms of the tamarisk. The wall was pierced by a locked iron gate, looking through which we at last perceived the object of our search. The herbage grew tall above the sill of the east—and only—window; and ivy so shrouded the walls that very little masonry was visible.

Hearing a shuffling behind us, we turned, and found that an old man, in a sailor's blue serge suit, was hurrying after us, key in hand, as fast as a pair of list slippers, as large as young cradles, would permit. He had a fortnight's growth of silver bristles on his chin, powdered with lichen-like patches of snuff; a pair of faded, watery, yet keen blue eyes; and ears that looked like nests, they were so overgrown with woolly hair. When he spoke, his voice was so hoarse and wheezy—he began and left off so abruptly—that it was as though some one capriciously 'played' him after the fashion of a barrel organ. Unlocking the iron gates, he shuffled through, and led the way round to the farther or west side, where was an arched door framed in clustering ivy. We could now perceive that the chancel alone was standing, the whole body of the church having vanished utterly. Pausing before opening the door, our guide pointed with his keys to a silvery streak scarcely a stone's cast away, which he told us, huskily, was the Backwater or Narrows seas. Beyond rose the pebble terraces of the famous Beach, one of the three examples of a natural breakwater which the world possesses. When a westerly gale is blowing, and the tide rushes with a swing round the cup-like West Bay, any unfortunate vessel that has got 'embayed' has little chance of escape. All the help the coast-guard can render is to plant a red flag, to indicate the least dangerous spot for her skipper to beach her, and to get the rocket apparatus ready.

Should the stormy waves toss the tormented pebbles hither and thither, the next tide leaves the terraces in nearly the same order as before the storm broke; yet these pebbles remain as exactly graduated in size, lessening towards Sydport, as they did in the days when the smugglers landing their booty in darkness, could tell their whereabouts by the size of the stones, and could hide, and find, the 'ankers of Hollands' by the same ineffaceable tokens. So much our guide told us, adding: 'There be none on ut neow: wuss luck. Us used to git a drop o' summat short in thim days. Passum he do say as we's better wi'out ut—us doan't b'lieve ut.' He looked so aggrieved and aggressive as he said this, slapping the palm of his under hand with the keys he held in the other, that one of the travellers was moved to hope that at least he got his glass of beer now and then. If ever we saw outraged dignity depicted on a human face, it was when our guide, having sullenly fitted the key in the lock, turned it, and then himself round upon us, and said, threateningly: 'Look ee're; us ain't got no fault to find wi' passum: o'ny un likes his larn tennus and his champagne, doan't un?—and us ain't findin' no fault o' beer,

o'ny ye doan't git no for'arder wi' ut—ye doan't git no for'arder."

After this summary exposition, he condescended to open the door and allow us to enter the dismantled chancel, dismantled of everything save some inscriptions on the floor, and some fine brasses on the walls. Looking through the arched doorway, our view was bounded by the tamarisk hedge and the beach beyond; and standing thus, we listened respectfully to the old man's tale of how sixty-eight years ago, when he was a boy of twelve, living in one of the cottages up the lane, they woke one morning—or, rather, were awakened by minute-guns from some vessel in distress in the bay; that they had heard the storm gathering in force all night, the waves in the West Bay thundering continuously against their rampart; how that the salt spray had so thickened on their lattices that they could not see through them, but that, going out into the lane to look for the vessel, they found their own lives in danger. Not only was the Backwater overflowing high-water mark, but the waves in the outer bay were showing angry crests above the top terrace of their protecting beach, while the spume was flying 'sky high.' Even as they looked, the first breach was made, and through came the waves like a pack of hungry wolves, lashed to madness by the howling blast that urged them on.

There was a stampede for the boats—flat-bottomed punts used by the men in crossing the Backwater; and in this way their lives and those of their families were saved. One after another the windows of the church were forced in, then the walls cracked, the roof heaved, and after a minute's conflict, the building yielded to its pitiless assailants, and, save the chancel, not one stone was left upon another. We had noticed that not a stone marked the resting-places of the dead; these, too, had been overthrown, and for ever lost sight of beneath the rush of sand and débris that followed the final ebb of that disastrous tide.

Pointing to two grassy mounds, the old man concluded his narrative thus: 'Zee them two graves? They be of a man an's wife. Forty odd years them wus mar'fed; and that marnin' as I'm a-tellin' o' you about, I seed he take she out o' a winder into a boät over yender, just a minnun' afore the cottage went slap! Seed ut myself.—The vessel? d'you say? That wur the "R'yal Suvin." The waves car'red her slap on to the top o' the beach, and theer her stuck.—Many a one's bin grounded into matches agin our beach; but o'ny one, as I knows on, 'as bin car'red to the top on ut and left theer.'

He paused so long that we prepared to take our departure; the sun had already taken his, and the shadows were turning on the beach to a deep purple. The old fellow had talked himself almost into geniality, to which we attributed his parting piece of advice, tinged though it was with a spice of professional jealousy: 'You kin goo and zee the Noo Church up yender, if you like; but 'tis all noo-like—open t'anybody; and no ux to talk and tell'ee nothun' about nothun.'

Accompanied by the cradles, their owner emitting an occasional gruff bar or two to intimate he was still on duty, we returned up the lane. Our driver—his knocking knees matched

his weak shoulders—freely proffered to conduct us to the New Church, as he let down the steps of our vehicle. To his evident relief, as also to the evident gratification of our late guide, who lingered to hear the result, we declined further questing of churches, for that day at least. As we turned to give a last look, Narrowses Church had again apparently sunk into the earth; but we could hear the lulling voice of its ancient enemy plashing rhythmically against the pebble terraces of its rampart.

### DEAD LEAF GULLY.

BY REGINALD HORSLEY.

IN TWO PARTS.

#### PART I.—THE SQUIRE'S SILVER SERVICE.

'DEAR SERGEANT SPARKS,—Come over and see me as soon as you can. Ben Drake, one of my stockmen, tells me he is positive that he recognised Flower in the township yesterday; and if the latter is really in the neighbourhood, we may expect trouble before long.'

So ran a note which I received early one morning from Mr Ingram, and I lost no time in making preparations for my departure.

'Tom,' said I, hailing Foster, 'I am going over to see the Squire. There is a rumour that Flower is about again, and I must get all possible information.'

'Am I to come with you?' asked Foster.

'No; there is no necessity for that. I shall return early to-morrow morning, or to-night, if the information justifies it.'

Two or three hours later, I rode up to Toomburra, and after stabling my horse, joined the Squire in his gunroom, where he sat cleaning up his firearms.

'Why, you look as if you were preparing to give battle to a very host,' I said with a laugh as we greeted one another.

'Nothing like being in good order,' responded the Squire; 'though I hardly suppose Flower will come this way.—Still, there may be mischief brewing. It is wonderful how things get about.'

'What do you mean?' I asked. 'What has got about?'

'Well,' replied the Squire, 'as you know, my nephew has recently returned from India. He visited us here, and brought my wife as a present a very valuable silver tea and coffee service of heavy Indian workmanship, seven pieces in all, and worth, I should say, at least a couple of hundred pounds. It is not at all the sort of thing we can make any use of here, and I think of sending it over to the bank at Toogong, to be taken care of.'

'Ah! and you suppose that Flower may take a fancy to it as it is on the way.'

'No; for, as I have kept my intention to myself, he naturally can know nothing about it. But what I anticipate is that he may pay me a visit here.'

'You suppose, then, that he has got wind of your new possession?'

'Exactly. The day it arrived—rather more than a week ago—the service was laid out on

the dining-room table for general admiration, of which I can tell you it received plenty. Only ourselves were there; but suddenly I heard a noise at the window, and turning sharply round, discovered Coogee's ugly face expanded in a grin of delight.

'Coogee the aboriginal?'

'The same. Well, of course Coogee saw the silver; and nothing would satisfy him but to be allowed to come in and look at it. He handled each piece, and seemed lost in wonder at its beauty, constantly exclaiming, "Budgerree! murry budgerree!" [Good! very good!] I was extremely vexed at his inopportune appearance.'

'Do you suppose, then, Squire, that Coogee gave information to Flower?'

'Not directly. But you know how these fellows chatter. So when, yesterday, Drake confided to me his suspicions that Flower was about, I thought it high time to send for you.'

'You were quite right, Squire. Flower's greed and daring may impel him to "crack your crib," as he would call it, alone.'

'What do you propose to do, then?' asked the Squire.

'To take up my quarters here.'

The Squire opened his mouth to speak; but I went on.

'I know that Flower may have spies about. Very likely he has: perhaps one of them has seen me come here. Very well, then; I propose that he shall see me go away again without loss of time.—By the way, have you any new hands just now?'

'No,' said the Squire.—'Oh, yes, I forgot: there is one, a carpenter named Murphy, whom I engaged to do piecework.—And, by Jove, it was the very day after Coogee saw the silver.'

'I thought as much. Where is this man working?'

'Close at hand, by the Warrigal's Pool. Do you think that he is in the game?'

'Yes; I do; but I mean to make sure. I want you to come out with me as far as the Pool, that I may have a good look at your new workman, and then I shall leave you.'

'But I thought you were going to stay,' said the Squire.

'You'd never do for a policeman, Squire.' I laughed. 'However, leave everything to me. Just answer naturally when I speak to you, and don't be surprised at anything I may say.'

I fetched my horse from the stable, and rode to the Warrigal's Pool, the Squire walking beside me.

'There is our man,' said the Squire, pointing to a fellow who was seated on a log eating. I ran my eye swiftly over the man, who was of middle size and strongly built, with flaming red hair and beard; while his face, pock-marked and freckled, was repulsively ugly. I did not recognise in him, however, one of Flower's gang.

'A new member,' I thought. 'He's no beauty, at all events.'

'So you are putting up a new hut, Squire?' I said, as we came within earshot of the man.

'Yes,' replied Mr Ingram in an easy tone;

'and Murphy here seems to be making a good job of it.'

'A new man, too, I see,' said I.—'You don't belong round here, do you, Murphy?'

'What's that to you?' answered the man morosely. 'I ain't done nothing you can lay hold on, that you should be so partic'lar anxious about me.'

'Come, Murphy,' put in the Squire, 'don't take offence; the Sergeant meant none, I am sure.'

Murphy scowled, but gradually allowed his features to relax in a smile, which gave his face even a more sinister expression. 'Oh, I dessay,' he returned; 'but peelers is cur'ous folk, always pokin' their noses in where they're not wanted. However, I'm from the Melbourne side, if you must know.'

'Not at all; I did not wish to know particularly,' I said; and turning to the Squire, went on in a careless voice: 'So you won't let me take that stuff down to Sydney for you to-night?'

'What stuff?' it was on the tip of the Squire's tongue to say, when I stopped him by adding: 'It will be safer there than here.'

'Very likely,' assented the Squire, taking my lead; 'but it will be all right here, I have no doubt.—Many thanks to you, all the same.—Are you really going to-night?'

'Yes,' I said, noticing that Murphy was watching me fixedly over the top of his pannikin, as he pretended to drink his tea. 'I have to see about a change of residence for one of my men.—Oh! by the way, I nearly forgot. Have you heard about Flower?' At this Murphy started perceptibly.

'No,' said the Squire innocently. 'What about him?'

'I hear that he has crossed the border, and gone into Queensland to give the sugar-sifters a taste of his quality.'

'Really?' said the Squire. 'Well, I'm sure I hope they will manage to get hold of him before long, for he is a very dangerous pest.'

Murphy wished me good-day quite civilly, as I again urged my horse into a walk; and when we were fairly out of hearing, I laughed outright. 'Bravo! Squire,' I said; 'you are getting on famously. You followed my lead quite naturally.'

'I am surprised to find myself so clever,' he said with an answering smile. 'What am I to do now?'

'Go home again, and make a wide leg to avoid Murphy.'

I did not go very far. In front of me was a thick belt of trees, and as soon as I was fairly in this, I dismounted, and after hanging up my horse, ran back to the border of the grove, whence I could command a distant view of the hut. The Squire was not in sight; but Murphy was still sitting on the log, from which he presently rose, gathered up his billy and pannikin, and went into the hut. In about ten minutes he came out again, and after a searching look all around, set off in the direction of the township.

'Ah! I was certain you were in it, my man,' I muttered, as I ran back to my horse. 'I think we shall have you now.'

'Well,' said Foster as I reined up at our quarters, 'what am I to do?'

'Mount and away to Dead Leaf Gully. Lead another horse for me along with you, and wait well out of sight till I join you. I start on the Sydney coach at six-thirty. By eight we shall be at the gully, where I shall leave the coach. It is only an hour's ride to Toomburra from there.'

Foster was soon off; and just before the coach started, I swung up beside the driver.

'Going on the down-track?' he asked cheerfully.

'Yes, for a spell. Times are slack here just now; so I can get away.'

'Let 'em go, Bill,' said the driver, gathering up his reins.—'Hullo! who's that? Out of the road, dern yer, unless yer want ter be killed.' As he spoke, he flicked his whip at a man who was standing with his hand on the flank of the near wheeler. The long lash curled sharply round the man, and as he shrank back with a muttered curse, the light of the coach lamp fell upon his face, and I recognised Murphy.

'Come to see me off,' I thought gleefully. 'The plot thickens.'

To the driver's intense surprise, I got off the coach at Dead Leaf Gully, leaving him to surmise what he chose, as I knew his gossip with the passengers could do no harm. When the coach was fairly on its way again, a low whistle sounded in the scrub to my right. I answered it, and immediately afterwards I heard the tramp of horses' feet, and presently Foster came in sight.

I told him all I knew as we rode rapidly over the plains towards Toomburra; and when we reached the flat about half a mile below the house, I drew rein. 'We will off saddles here and walk up, Tom,' I said. 'That rascal Murphy may have returned, and be on the watch, for all we know. The Squire expects us, and we must get in without being seen by any one else.'

We took off the saddles, hobbled our horses, and walked quietly up the rise on the top of which the homestead of Toomburra was built. A light was burning low in the dining-room.

'Go round to the back, Tom,' I whispered, 'and wait till I let you in. Keep a sharp eye for Murphy or any one else who may be about.'

Creeping up to the veranda, I slid between the vine-covered posts, and softly hailed the Squire. 'Don't be alarmed,' I called gently. 'It is I, Sergeant Sparks. Get up presently, and put yourself between the light and me; I want to come in without being observed.'

Mr Ingram, who was reading, made no sign, but went quietly on with his book. In a moment or two, however, he rose, and taking his pipe from the mantel-piece, stood against the table, with his back to the lamp, which he thus obscured, as if looking out into the night. Seeing this, I at once dropped on all-fours, and crawled swiftly in through the French window, luckily left open on account of the heat.

'Stand as you are,' I muttered, as I crawled past him into a corner; 'and presently close the window, as though you were shutting up for the night.'

This the Squire did in the most natural way in the world. 'All fast, Sergeant,' he said in a low tone.—'But what are we to do now?'

'First of all, let in Foster, who is round at the back,' I answered, making for the passage. —'Hullo! what's that?' There was a sound of scuffling outside, a heavy fall, and then silence again. Rushing to the back door, I flung it open, and nearly fell over Foster, who was holding a man down on the ground.

'Who have you got there, Tom?' I asked, as I recovered my balance.

'Don't know,' said he. 'I found him sneaking round the door; and as he couldn't give an account of himself, I collared him. I threw him just as he was going to draw on me.'

'Quite right.—Bring him in, and let us have a look at him.'

Foster disarmed the man, and forcing him to his feet, pushed him before him into the dining-room.

'Murphy!' exclaimed the Squire in astonishment.

'Yes; I thought he would be somewhere about,' I said. 'But we are in luck's way to get hold of him like this.—You must have had a tiring day, Murphy,' I added sarcastically. 'Did you come up to the house to do a little carpentering at this late hour? Or have you done the job already?'

The Squire looked bewildered at this; but Murphy stood in sullen silence.

'Look here, my man,' I went on, changing my tone, 'the game is up for you, at all events; so you may as well tell all you know. Do this for me, and I'll do what I can for you later on. If you persist in keeping silence, you can take the consequences.'

Murphy opened his mouth as if about to speak, but hesitated.

'Come,' I urged; 'it is your best chance. You have tampered with the locks somewhere. Where is it?'

'He can't possibly have been in the house, Sergeant,' exclaimed the Squire, 'or I must have heard him.'

'He has been in the house, Mr Ingram—of that I am perfectly sure. He saw me safely away by the coach, as he thought, and then bolted back here to make his preparations. He must have had a horse hung up somewhere, or he couldn't have done it.'

At this Murphy broke out into a dolorous whine. 'I'll tell everything,' he said, 'if you'll only let me off.'

'I can't promise that,' I answered; 'but I'll try to make things as light as possible for you. It is all for your own sake, you know. We can find out everything just as well without you. Speak out now.'

'I seen the Captain,' said Murphy, after a moment's deliberation, 'about half an hour after you left by the coach. He give me my orders, and I rode over here bare-back on a colt I roped in on Fairley's paddock.'

'I told you so,' said I to the Squire.—'Well?'

'I'd learned the lay of the house since I been here,' went on Murphy, 'and I saw as one room warn't occupied. I let Flower know this; and as he thinks you're out of the way on

the Sydney road, he's going to crack the house to-night.'

'Were you to let him in?'

'No; I was to nobble the window.'

Foster left the room at a sign from me, and Murphy resumed.

'I had just finished the job, when I heard the master talking to some one; and guessin' somethin' was up, I made tracks through the window; and I'd a got clear off if I hadn't run against the trooper at the back,' he finished in an aggrieved voice, just as Foster returned.

'Well, Tom, what did you find?'

'The window-rope is cut, the sash lifted out, and the bolt screwed off the communicating door,' said Foster.

'Ah!—Who sleeps in the next room, Squire?'

'My daughter,' answered the old gentleman, turning rather pale.

'Humph! It is as well we came.—Now, Murphy, is Flower coming over alone?'

'Yes. He had a squint at the house a couple of days ago, and he knows the lay of the window.'

'Where can we stow this fellow for the night, Mr Ingram?' I asked.

'He can stay here,' said the Squire: 'I will look after him.'

'Very good. You have your revolver. If he attempts to raise an alarm, use it without hesitation.'

'I'll keep quiet,' protested Murphy; 'I don't want no holes let into my skin.'

'You will sit quiet, at all events,' I answered, clapping a pair of handcuffs on his wrists.—'Tie him in a chair, Tom.'

As Foster did so, I turned to the Squire again. 'How many servants sleep in the house?' I asked.

'None; their rooms are all outside, at the end of the covered-way.'

'So much the better. Now Miss Ingram is with her mother, I suppose?'

'Yes, in my wife's bedroom.'

'Good. The ladies can remain there. Do you go and see that the window is shut and barred; and tell Mrs Ingram and Miss Mary to go to bed and not trouble themselves at all.'

Mr Ingram went off, and I rapidly arranged a plan of action with Foster. 'You will station yourself by the open window in the spare room,' I told him, 'and I will watch on the veranda outside. When Flower comes, let him get fairly into the room, and don't touch him. I will follow hard on his heels, and we will go for him together.'

'But why don't you wait in the room as well?' asked the Squire, who had joined us again.

'Because if he takes alarm and tries to bolt without getting in at all, I shall be there to intercept him.'

We left the room, and crossing the passage, passed through Miss Ingram's room, and entered the spare room, where we found the lower sash of the window removed and set against the wall. The window-ledge itself was about four feet from the ground, and I vaulted out with a parting word to Foster. 'Look to your revolver, Tom,' I said. 'And mind you let him well in.'

The veranda came to an end about ten feet from the window of the spare room, and I took up my post upon the former behind the last pillar, the thick creepers growing round which would have completely concealed me even in broad daylight. It was now about eleven o'clock, and everything was very still. Not a sound was heard in the house, not a rustle in the deep woods beyond. A clock in the house chimed midnight. Still dead silence. One o'clock, and no sign of Flower. It was dreary work waiting there in the darkness, and I began to long for action. Foster, I knew, must be fretting his heart out. Two o'clock.—Ah! what was that? Faintly borne on the still air, my strained ears could catch the sound of a horse shaking himself with saddle and bridle away down on the flat.

'Our man is at hand,' I thought. 'He has hung up his horse below there. He can't be very far away now.'

Ten minutes more or so of silence, and then I heard a slight rustling among the shrubs in front of the house, and sounds of stealthy feet, treading cautiously. I peered out from behind my pillar; but it was too dark to see more than a few feet away. Nearer and nearer came the footfalls. Minutes passed so slowly that they seemed like hours, and at length the strange visitor appeared, moving slowly forward, making for the west window. At last he reached it, and stood still. Were his suspicions aroused? I wondered. I held my breath, and gripping my revolver, prepared to spring, when suddenly a beam of light glowed in the darkness under the window, and the next instant the robber flashed the broad blaze of a dark-lantern into and all around the room. As instantly two reports rang out in rapid succession, and as I sprang with a bound from my hiding-place, I heard a bullet sing away over the garden, and a loud cry from Foster: 'I'm hit!'

Flower heard me coming, and turned to meet me. So short was the distance between us that our revolvers crashed together in the air, exploding harmlessly as they met. For a moment each seized and held the other's wrist as in a vice, and then, as if by tacit agreement, our revolvers were dropped to the ground, and we locked in a deadly grapple. It was no child's play. Both of us were strong and lithe and active, and we reeled and swayed hither and thither, with not a sound between us but the quick gasping breaths that broke from each in the dreadful effort to gain the vantage. But the struggle was as short as it was violent. Flower was the heavier man, and with a fierce trouble at my heart, I felt myself borne backwards to the ground, my antagonist's knee upon my chest, and his strong fingers gripping my throat and compressing my windpipe, so that to call for aid was now impossible. His dark, bearded face was close to mine, and his hot breath stifled me as he panted forth a string of furious oaths.

'Curse you!' he said. 'You've spoiled my game again, as you've done this many a time before. But it's my turn now, and I'll leave my mark on you before I go.'

The breath was nearly squeezed out of my

body ; but half-unconscious as I was, I dimly saw a long bladed knife raised above me, and then some one leaped from the window, fell, raised himself again—crack ! crack ! one shot after the other, the knife clattered harmlessly to the ground. The grip on my throat relaxed, and shaking himself free, the bushranger bounded through the shrubbery before I could collect my scattered senses.

'Help !' roared Foster, for it was he who had come to my rescue so opportunely. 'Help !' he cried again, sending another shot in the direction Flower had taken ; and then he reeled to and fro like a drunken man, and just as I staggered to my feet and Mr Ingram came rushing out, fell prone upon the ground.

But now the whole establishment was roused ; lights flashed hither and thither, women-servants screamed at the top of their voices, and the men flocked from their quarters to learn the cause of the unusual disturbance. I knelt down by Foster and turned him over, when he opened his eyes and looked up at me.

'Safe, Sergeant ?' he said faintly. 'That's right ! Got a bullet in me somewhere. Couldn't get out sooner. But I hit him—I'm sure I hit'— and he swooned again.

'Look to him, Squire,' I cried ; 'and you, Drake, come with me. Flower is wounded, I know, and we may catch him yet. The horses are down on the flat. Come along !' And I raced through the garden, followed by the stockman. But before I reached the boundary fence I pulled up short, for a deep groan fell upon my ear.

'He is here somewhere,' I shouted.—'Bring along a light, Squire.'

The Squire and the men came running up with lanterns ; and a few paces farther on we found Flower, shot unto death.

'Water !' he moaned as we bent over him. He was evidently at his last gasp ; but one of the men hastened back to the house for some water. Long before he could return, however, a strong convulsion shook the bushranger's frame. He opened his eyes, and their last conscious look fell on me. 'The odd trick to you this time, Sergeant,' he said, and never spoke again.

#### CATERPILLARS IN PROCESSION.

THE extensive pine forest which covers the dunes of South-western France, stretching from the 'Bassin d'Arcachon' on the north for many miles southwards towards Biarritz, is the home of a curious Caterpillar ('*Bombyx Pythio-campa*'), of the same family as the silkworm. These insects possess a few interesting characteristics. They pass the winter in nests at the pine-tree top—very snug nests, woven around a bunch of pine needles, and large enough to accommodate a family of from fifty to two hundred.

Spring having arrived, each community leaves its winter home and prepares to set out into an unknown world. On leaving the nest, they form a procession in single file, each caterpillar in immediate communication with the one pre-

ceding and the one following it. In this manner they descend the tall pine and reach *terra firma*. From this habit they acquire the local name of 'Chenille Processionnaire,' or processional caterpillar. Their principal object now is to bury themselves in the sand ; and to achieve this, some distance has often to be traversed before a spot suitable for the purpose can be found. Especially is this so when the pine-trees happen to be situated in the streets or gardens of Arcachon ; and in such a case an interesting and rather amusing sight may be seen, when a procession consisting of some hundreds of the insects, and perhaps fifteen or sixteen yards in length, wends its way slowly along the road.

Let us detach two or three from the middle of the line—thus dividing it into two parties—and watch the result. The last of the foremost portion, feeling the loss of his neighbour, immediately stops, and this action is communicated all along the line until the vanguard is at a stand-still. Meanwhile, the leader of the rear portion redoubles his speed, and in a short time has caught up to the foremost party, and the touch being communicated, the whole procession resumes the march with as little delay as possible. When a suitable place has been found, the party forms into a group, and by a gentle wriggling motion, digs a hole in the soft sand in which the chrysalis state is attained.

Care must be taken not to touch these caterpillars with the hand, as the hairs create a stinging rash on the skin. So poisonous, indeed, are they, that sensitive skins feel the rash during the spring, although unconscious of any direct contact with the insect.

In appearance, these caterpillars are of a dark brown or neutral colour with orange-coloured spots, and about an inch and a half in length. They are much disliked by the inhabitants of the towns and villages which they infest, who lose few opportunities of destroying them in large numbers.

#### AT LAST.

THE woods are sere, and the winds are grieving ;  
Under a sky that is angry and red,  
The sea, like a tortured heart, is heaving ;  
Summer, and with it my dreaming, is fled.

All the roses lie crushed and broken,  
Like the fair hopes that I cherished so ;  
Time it is our farewells were spoken ;  
Fate has decreed it, and I must go.

What ! Are those tears through your lashes stealing ?  
What is 't your faltering lips would frame ?  
Can it be you before me low kneeling,  
Brokenly, tremblingly breathing my name ?

Oh, my beloved ! say, say I'm not dreaming.  
Let the winds rave and the wild waters chide ;  
Eyes full of love-light in mine are beaming ;  
Summer returns evermore to abide.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

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